Export of Agricultural Product from West Bengal

6265. SHRI RATNA BAHADUR RAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the agricultural products exported from West Bengal to other countries;

(b) the quantum of such exported products during the last three years; and

(c) the amount of foreign exchange earned by West Bengal for the country within this period?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Jute, large cardamom, tea, rice, vegetables, flowers, marine products, etc., are major agricultural commodities exported from West Bengal.

Details of state-wise exports are not maintained.

India's share in World Export Trade in Agricultural Products

6266. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) India's percentage of share in world export trade in agricultural products at present and as compared with the percentage of last three years;

(b) whether it is a fact that the total volume of farm exports is still very low and there is over dependence on a few commmodities; if so, details thereof; and

(c) the steps Government have taken or propose to take to boost farm exports?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) India's share of export of agro-based commodities is less than 1 per cent of the world trade. Commodity-wise details of India's share in the world trade, in so far as they are available, are contained in Table No. 7.5 (pages S-95 to S-97) of the Economic Survey of the Government of India for 1993-94, copies of which are available in Parliament Library.

(b) Yes, Sir. The major reasons being low productivity and high price of raw materials; inadequate processing facilities, poor capital investment and high rate of interest; heavy post-harvest losses due to inadequate and unscientific post-harvest management practices; and lack of concentrated production facilities for export quality production near exit points.

(c) Some of the specific steps taken to promote farm exports are :—

(1) Lowering of import duties on certain inputs and materials required by the agricultural sector;

(2) Bringing the sector under the purview of the schemes of Export Oriented Units (EOUs) and Export Processing Zones (EPZs) and allowing agriculture based EOUs the benefit of 50 per cent of turnover to be sold in the domestic market as against the 25 per cent norm generally fixed.

(3) More aggressive overseas publicity and sponsoring of trade delegations, arranging of buyer-seller meets and arranging of inter-action with importers.

Potential for Agricultural and Horticultural Exports

6267. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the potential for agricultural and horticultural exports of the country during the coming years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the countries identified for the export;

(d) whether there are any hurdles in these exports, if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps being taken to remove those hurdles?